

COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

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"FIVE HUNDRED GUINEAS will be presented to any person who can procure an appointment of *Barrack-Master* in Great Britain, or the *Paymastership* of a district."—*COURIER Newspaper*, 10th August, 1807.

"FOR SALE, the manor, or lordship, of Lampeter, with all its *political* and other *rights*. Lampeter is a contributory borough for returning a member to parliament for the town of Cardigan; and all persons admitted at the Lord's Court are entitled to vote for the return of such member. More upon this head appears unnecessary in this place."—*COURIER Newspaper*, 10th August, 1807.

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TO THE INDEPENDENT ELECTORS OF THE CITY AND LIBERTIES OF WESTMINSTER. LETTER XXIV.

GENTLEMEN,

Let us turn to other matters. Having taken a view of our affairs with regard to foreign countries, let us look a little into our situation at home; and see what is necessary to be done there.

When we complain, that, under the name and shew of public offices, our money is squandered away upon idlers and rogues and plunderers, we are reproached with Jacobinism. "It was thus," say John Bowles and his crew, "that the French revolutionists began their works." And, the inference is, that, we wish to bring about here what was brought about in France. That we wish to destroy the nobility and to kill the king and his family; and that, the consequence of this would be, a military despotism under an English Buonaparté. Whether the *present state* of France, compared to its *former state*, be an example so terrific as John Bowles and his crew would make it appear, I shall not attempt to determine. But, what have our complaints to do with the French revolution, or with any revolution? If, however, it be insisted upon that the French revolution began in complaints like ours, would it not be advisable to remove the ground of our complaints? No: that is never thought of. To vilify, and, if possible to oppress, if not kill, the complainants, is the mode which John and his crew recommend in order to prevent our complaints from producing effects similar to those produced in France. They accuse us of falsehood; and therefore, it is necessary, now—and then, to state an undeniable fact. What would John say, I wonder, to the public advertisement for the purchase of an office, such as I have placed at the head of this

sheet, and scores of which we daily see in the newspapers? What would he say to it? Why, Gentlemen, nothing at all; not a word *to it* or *about it*; he would instantly fall upon the person who noticed it, with a full-mouthed cry of Jacobinism and disloyalty and treason; and, when he sees this sheet, he would have me strangled if he *legally* could; for John is quite one of your legal men.

But, to you, Gentlemen, and to all those who have to pay such heavy taxes, without having the means of licking yourselves whole again by getting a share of those taxes; to you I put the question, whether it be not a scandalous thing, that offices, the salaries of which the public pay, should thus be bought and sold? It is well known to you, Gentlemen, that, where one estate, or one thing of any sort, is sold, or bought, in consequence of public advertisement, there are fifty sold, or bought, without such advertisement; and, if this be the case, in transactions where no desire of secrecy exists, or need to exist, how large a proportion of all the offices is it reasonable to suppose, are bought and sold? And, as to *who are the sellers* of offices need not be pointed out; for, whether the villains be great or small, whether they be male or female, the wrong done to us is exactly the same; and, besides, though a little villain may be the actual vender, he has obtained his power to sell from some one above him.

When we complain of the enormous amount of the taxes, for the collection of which such rigorous laws have been passed, we are tauntingly asked, "if we would have *no army or navy*." We must have both; but, we would not have Barrack-masters and Paymasters upon an establishment, which will enable the officer to give five hundred pounds for his commission; for, reckon how we will, that money is so much of the taxes *wasted*. Besides; if the offices are sold, who is it that *chooses* and *appoints* offi-

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cers? This is one, out of many, of the ways of wasting the public money; and, my real opinion, is, that if all waste was as effectually prevented as it might be, the navy and the army might be maintained for less than one half of the present expence, while, at the same time, those who now live in idleness upon public plunder, would be compelled to labour for their bread, and thereby augment the resources of the country. This, however, according to the cant of the leeches, who are determined to hang on upon the carcass of the nation till they are absolutely cut off, is termed "Jacobin doctrine." To own this name of Jacobin, therefore, we must make up our minds; and wait patiently for the day when we can give the blood-suckers a hearty squeeze, reminding them, at the same time, of their past abuse.

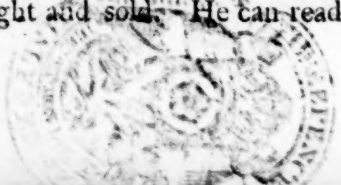
The second part of my motto, which was pointed out to me by a correspondent, whose letter you will find in another part of this sheet, relates to a subject, which cannot be brought too frequently under discussion. It is not, verily it is not astonishing, that offices should be bought and sold by public advertisement, when, by public advertisement, "the political rights" of the people are unequivocally offered for sale. When their votes at elections are tendered publicly as an object of purchase; and, when no scruple at all is made to treat them as the *property* of individuals.

In the midst of all this, Gentlemen, there are men base enough, wretches so impudent, so abandoned, so prostituted, as to represent you as the enemies of the constitution of England! When called upon to give our money, or to risk our lives, in support of the constitution, it is painted to us in colours the most delightful; it is arrayed in robes of purity, justice, and freedom. The election of members of parliament is, we are told, in the words of the law, "perfectly free;" and, when we complain, that seats in parliament are publicly advertised for sale, the infamous wretches, who are concerned in, or who connive at, such sale, have the audacity to accuse us of wanting to destroy the constitution. Vengeance upon the heads of these unprincipled and audacious miscreants must come first or last, and it is little matter from what hand it comes.—Not one inch would I, for my part, stir to save their heads from a mill-stone falling from the clouds. John Bowles and his set are well aware of the laws respecting elections; and yet, John's piety, which is almost incredible, has never led him to descant upon the perjuries which *must* take place when seats in parliament are bought and sold. He can read these adver-

tisements as well, or nearly as well, as you can; but, though he be a leader in the Vice-Suppression Society, not a single word does he say upon the subject of this enormous vice. John pretends to be in great tribulation, lest the two-penny hops and the gingerbread fairs should bring down the vengeance of heaven; but, the purchase and sale of seats in parliament, with all their indispensable perjuries, are beneath the notice of John, though John would, I dare say, have a beggar most heartily castigated, if he were to prevaricate in his worshipful presence.

Gentlemen, Pitt, *before he became minister*, spoke with horror of the sale of seats in parliament. At that time he was engaged, with Mr. Horne Tooke and others, in forming a plan for collecting, by a circular correspondence, the sense of the people, in their parishes, or smaller districts; which sense, when obtained, was to be pressed upon the House of Commons, for the purpose of obtaining a reform of that House, which reform he, Pitt, asserted openly in the House, to be absolutely necessary, in order to prevent the government of England from becoming, under the names and forms of freedom, a mere despotism in fact. But, in ten years afterwards, this same Pitt *being minister*, and having rendered a reform more necessary than ever, caused to be prosecuted, that same Mr. Horne Tooke and others for having endeavoured to bring about, by the very same means that Pitt had before recommended, that very same measure, which he had represented as absolutely necessary, in order to prevent the government of England from becoming a mere despotism in fact, under the names and forms of freedom. Now, Gentlemen, though some persons, from ignorance of the history of these matters, and others, from feelings of alarm which Pitt craftily raised, have attempted to justify this his pursuit of the life of Mr. Tooke and others, it is not, I hope, possible, that there can, at this time, be found, in all England, one man so impudently, so profligately unjust, as to continue such attempts. Yet, are we to pay for the raising of a monument to this man, as we have already been compelled to pay his debts.

The way, Gentlemen, to combat our revilers, who are almost all of them profound hypocrites, is to put this question to them: "Do you approve of the sale of seats in parliament, and of the indispensable perjury thereon attendant?" They will always equivocate and evade and shuffle. They will tell you, that it always has been thus. They will instance something worse, if that



be possible. They will (precious hypocrites!) lament the frailty of human nature, and the consequent imperfection of all human institutions; and will, very likely, conclude with a prayer that it may please God to remove these evils. But, be you not so cheated. Repeat your question. Stick fast to them. Insist upon a categorical answer; and, you will find their hypocrisy too profound for them to say that they approve of the sale of seats in parliament and of the indispensably accompanying perjury. Well, then, if they disapprove of these, they must next allow, that it would be desirable to put an end to them; and, it necessarily follows, that they must approve of the conduct of those who endeavour to effect that desirable object. But, no: they will not. Bring them to this point, and off they start again into their ejaculations and prayers, first, and, next, into their impudent accusations against those who would, if they could, accomplish what they themselves have acknowledged to be desirable. So that there is no hope of converting them. They are bent upon plunder, or upon the support of plunderers. They are resolved upon sucking the blood out of the carcase of the nation as long as they can; and, therefore, let us, on our parts, be resolved to pluck them off that wasted carcase as soon as possible.

In the meanwhile, Gentlemen, you have *real* representatives. The silly observations of the newspaper hacks, in which they affect to regard their predictions, about the *insignificancy* of Sir Francis Burdett, as being now accomplished, only betray their apprehensions for that part of the plunder which they enjoy; or, rather, receive; for, it is impossible, that such wretches can enjoy any thing. They well know, that it has, as yet, not been in the power of Sir Francis to attend in his place with any effect; that he could not, without risk of his life, have sit a night in the House of Commons. He himself has told you, that, without the aid of the *people*, he shall be able to do no good; but, one thing he will soon be able to do, and that is, to convince the people, that, without their acting, all of them, with the public spirit that has animated you, *nothing is to be done for their good by any body*. He will be able to make the people fully acquainted with many things, which they now understand but imperfectly. He will be able to expose to their full view things, which are now hidden from them. He will, you may be assured, take part with no place and self seeking faction; he will have a hand in no motion, calculated to amuse the foolish and somewhat base people, who are

yet to be amused with what is called *debating* a question; he will be guilty of no act which shall give countenance to the impudent pretence respecting *decisions* in the House; he can, without even one man to co-operate with him, make the Honourable House itself show you what the Honourable House is and what the Honourable House is capable of doing. This he has perfectly in his own power, and this he will, if he lives, assuredly do; and, it is because he will do this, because they know he will do this, that the newspaper hirelings revile him. There is not a man amongst them, who is not convinced, in his own mind, of the falsehood of the assertions and insinuations, which he is daily pouring forth against Sir Francis Burdett. He *knows* they are utterly false; but, a considerable part of his daily bread depends upon his writing and publishing them; and, while this is the case, publish them he will. In one part of his paper, you will find the dangers of the country portrayed in horrid colours, and the necessity of an union of all men in its defence strenuously urged; but, he is sure to have, in another part, something or other to convince you, that he would much rather the country should be conquered, than that corruption and speculation should be destroyed. He and the plundering gang, the den of thieves, who support him, must not, however, expect our love, in return, but our steady and active hatred, and our vengeance, when we shall be able to inflict it. They have declared a war of extermination against us; and, I trust, I confidently trust, that we shall not sue for peace.

The motion of Lord Cochrane respecting places and pensions and fees and perquisites held or received by members of the Honourable House and their relations had done great good. He wanted to have a list of these *alone* published, that the public might judge of the state of the Honourable House; that the people might know how much of their money went into the pockets of those, who are said to be the guardians of the public treasure; who are said to "*hold the purse strings of the nation*," and who, in good earnest, do seem to hold them. The Honourable House did, however, not relish this. The Honourable House thought that a list of *all* places and pensions, &c. &c. &c. held by *all manner of persons*, preferable to the nice little list pointed out by his lordship, and, then, you know, Gentlemen, we might, *if we could*, find out who were members of parliament and their relations, and who were not. Even this list, however, has not yet been

produced, and the persons, to whom the making of it was referred, declared, that it was impossible for them to say what time, during the *next session* of parliament, they should be able to produce it. Never mind! The motion has had an excellent effect. It has shown us the feeling of the Honourable House. It has furnished us with one proof more, and a most convincing proof too, of the nature of that feeling. These proofs, frequently repeated, are what we want. If any thing can do us good, these proofs, well packed upon one another, will do it. The plunderers have not accused Lord Cochrane of *treasonable* designs yet; but, they, in the superabundance of their charity, suspect him to be *mad* only. If a man be not a coward in the field, or a plunderer at home, or a partizan of one or the other, the miscreant writers are sure to represent him as a traitor or a madman. And, it is after this, that they expect us to love and cherish them!

In a future letter I purpose to give you an account of some curious *contracts*. In the meanwhile, I remain,

Gentlemen,

Your faithful friend,

and obedient servant,

WM. COBBETT.

Botley, 26th Aug. }
1807.

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

PROCEEDINGS IN PARLIAMENT (continued from page 181).—There are three subjects, which came before parliament, during the last session, upon which I think it may be useful to offer a few remarks: I *Poor Laws*; II. *Election Writs*; III. *IRISH INSURRECTION BILL*.—Mr. Whitbread had two or more bills prepared for altering and adding to the Poor Laws. There are only two of his intended provisions that it is my intention to notice, namely, the *giving to each parishioner a number of votes in the vestry proportioned to the amount of the rates paid by him*; and, the *taxing of the several parishes for the purpose of providing schools for the children of the poor*. I object to the whole of his plan, as calculated to do no good whatever, while it might, in many cases, tend to evil, by causing it to be believed, that the misery of the poor and the increase of paupers had their rise in causes other than those of taxation and the idleness of the innumerable swarms who live upon the taxes. From the accounts, laid before the Honourable House, it appears, that the increase in the number of paupers has kept an exact pace with the increase in the real

amount of the taxes. Yet, it never appears to have occurred to Mr. Whitbread, that the taxes were the cause of pauperism, notwithstanding the history of all countries might have aided in producing in his mind a conviction of this truth. In the American States there were no paupers previous to taxation; but, they are now found in tolerable abundance; and, we have heard of the soup-shops and other quackery of that sort, even in Philadelphia, where my poor rates amounted to a considerable sum annually. In New Brunswick, when I was there, there were no taxes, and there were no paupers. Am I told, that there would have been paupers, if there had been a law to relieve them? My answer is, that there is no such law in Ireland; but, that country, heavily taxed, has a population of one fourth paupers, while in England the paupers amount to about one seventh of the population.—But, supposing him to have overlooked what was pointed out by experience, reason alone might have convinced him, that taxation must produce paupers; and, if he himself had wanted the faculty of reasoning, a correspondent of mine has, long ago, reasoned the matter ready to his hand.—I object to the whole of his project, therefore, as totally inadequate to the purposes professed to be in view; but, as the project has been rejected, I shall, for the present, content myself with a remark or two upon the two intended provisions above-mentioned, and which, to me, are particularly objectionable.—The first would have changed the mode of voting at vestries. Every parishioner, who pays poor-rates, has now a right to vote, in these parochial assemblies, and the decision, upon all occasions, is by the majority of votes. Mr. Whitbread would have given to each parishioner a number of votes in proportion to the amount of his rates. So that a man of large property would have had ten or a dozen votes, while some of the parishioners would have had but one vote; and, in some parishes, a decided majority of the votes would have been in one single person. "Very true," will he say, "but, who should have the votes but those who pay the rates, and who are, of course, the persons solely interested?" If we were speaking of the concerns of a trading company, I should have no objection to this reasoning, though I should advise no one to take a *small* share even in such concerns. But, we are here speaking of an establishment where something else besides the mere interest of the persons paying rates is to be considered. There are here the interests of two parties to be taken care of, namely, those of the persons paying

rates and *those of the poor*; and, in order to insure the best chance of a proper feeling prevailing upon all occasions, you must give to every parishioner, from the Esquire to the shoemaker and the little farmer, a right of voting. Many of those who pay rates are but a step or two from pauperism themselves; and, they are the most likely persons to consider duly the important duty of doing, in case of relief, what they would be done unto. "But," Mr. Whitbread will say, "is it right for these persons to *give away the money of others*?" It is *not* the money of others, any more than the amount of tithes is the farmer's money. The maintenance of the poor is a charge upon the land, a charge duly considered in every purchase and in every lease. Besides, as the law now stands, though every parishioner has a vote in vestry, must it not be evident, to every man who reflects, that the man of large property and superior understanding will have weight in proportion? That he will, in fact, have *many votes*? If he play the tyrant, even little men will rise against him, and it is right they should have the power of so doing; but, while he conducts himself with moderation and humanity, while he behaves as he ought to do to those who are beneath him in point of property, there is no fear but he will have quite a sufficiency of weight at every vestry. The votes of the inferior persons in the parish are, in reality, dormant, unless in cases where some innovation, or some act of tyranny, is attempted. They are, like the sting of the bee, weapons merely of defence. If this proposition of Mr. Whitbread were adopted, why not upon the very same principle, change the mode of voting for *members of a county*? Why not give to the freeholders of ten thousand pounds a year *five thousand votes each*? Mr. Whitbread is, or, rather, was, a parliamentary reformer; and this would be a reform with a vengeance! There needs nothing more, I think, to show, that Mr. Whitbread must have considered the subject very superficially.—The other intended provision, which was framed into a bill of itself, and which bill, after passing the Honourable House, was thrown out by the Lords, is, in my opinion, full as objectionable. I like not the ground, upon which it stood, namely, that the poverty of the people arises from their *vices*. This is first assumed, and then it is asserted, that *education*, as Mr. Whitbread calls it, would *prevent those vices*. It is very convenient for those, who, from whatever motive, are desirous of supporting the taxing system, to take it for granted, that the cause of the increasing wretchedness of the people lies with the

people themselves. Government is continually represented as the guide, the guardian, the nursing parent of the people; and, therefore, it is maintained, that its powers ought to be great as they are. But, it is truly curious, that when the people, when these guided and guarded and nursed children, become half-starved and ragged and filthy, the fault is laid solely upon the children, and not upon the guide, guardian, and nurse. I do not say, that poverty and misery do not sometimes, and even very frequently, arise from vice. They are, indeed, the natural and just punishments of vice, in the lower as well as the higher orders of society. "The drunkard and glutton shall come to poverty," is a judgment which applies to all ranks of men. Dishonesty, hypocrisy, laziness and insolence are followed by a loss of confidence and regard; these by a loss of employment and of profit; and these by poverty and misery. But, we have, in England and Wales, 1,200,000 parish paupers; and, that all these have become paupers from their vices is utterly incredible. These paupers are nearly, if not quite, three times as numerous as they were when Pitt, to whom we are to raise a monument, became minister; so that, at any rate, if increase of vice, and not increase of taxation be the cause, the people, under Pitt's sway, have become three times as vicious as they before were. The cruel malt and hop tax has, indeed, driven them from their homes to the public-house, where some increase of vice may have been engendered; but, one would have thought, that, though this terrible tax is a great gain to the brewers, the man, who was shocked at the increase of vice, would have proposed to *remove the cause*, or would have held his tongue. An increase of vice is not, however, the great cause of the increase of the number of paupers. The great cause, is, the system of taxation, which creates such a number of idle persons, which draws from labour so large a part of its fruits, which has an inevitable tendency to reduce the number of *proprietors*, and which, as inevitably, increases the number of paupers; for, when men see not the least chance of obtaining property, it soon becomes a matter of indifference with them, whether the means of their subsistence come to them in the shape of wages or of parish relief.—But, supposing, for argument's sake, that the poverty and misery of the people have arisen from their vices; and, carrying our complaisance still further, supposing, that, some how or other, the people have, since Pitt became minister, become, all of a sudden, cursed with a vicious propensity now

is this vicious propensity to be removed by sending the children to a parish-school? Let Mr. Whitbread search the records of Botany Bay, of the Hulks, of Newgate, of the County Jails, and he will find, I believe, that for one person incapable of reading and writing, he will there find recorded the names of fifty capable of reading and writing. But, the vice *has increased* of late years. That is distinctly asserted. Indeed that assertion is a necessary part of the ground-work of the proposition. Well, then, has a want of what Mr. Whitbread calls education *increased of late years*? Have schools become less numerous? Have books, pamphlets, reviews, magazines, newspapers, reading-rooms, circulating libraries, methodist and other meetings, declined in number? Mr. Whitbread well knows, that they have increased tenfold. How, then, can he expect to eradicate vice, and thereby reduce the number of paupers, by adding about twelve thousand to the number of schools already existing?—It is the lot of man, and most wisely has it so been ordained, that he shall live by the sweat of his brow. In one way or another every man must labour, or he must suffer for the failure in health or in estate. Some are to labour with the mind, others with the limbs; and, to suppose what is, by Mr. Whitbread, called education, necessary to those who labour with their limbs, is, in my opinion, as absurd as it would be, to suppose that the being able to mow and to reap are necessary to a minister of state or an astronomer. The word *ignorance* is as much abused by some persons as the word *learning*; but, those who regard the latter as consisting *solely* in the acquirement of a knowledge of the meaning of words in various languages, which knowledge is to be derived only from books, will naturally regard the former as consisting *solely* of a want of the capacity to derive any knowledge at all from books. If the farmer understands well how to conduct the business of his farm, and if, from observation of the seasons and the soil, he knows how to draw from the latter as much profit as therefrom can be drawn; if the labourer be expert at ploughing, sowing, reaping, mowing, making of ricks and of fences, loading the waggon, threshing and winnowing the corn, and bestowing upon the cattle the various necessary cares; if this be the case, though neither of them can write or read, I call neither an ignorant man. The education of these men is a finished one, though neither may ever have looked into a book; and, I believe, Mr. Whitbread would be greatly puzzled to sug-

gest even the most trifling probable benefit that either could derive from an acquaintance with the use of letters.—“But, men, thus naturally gifted and disposed, might have *risen* in life, if they had been taught reading and writing.” It is very likely, that they might have been, by such means, removed from the fields to the city; but, without allowing that that remove would have *raised* them in life, and positively denying that it would have added to their happiness, I think I may anticipate that Mr. Whitbread will concede, that *all* men cannot be so removed; and, then, let it be observed, that his system of education is intended for *general* effect. Would I, then, advise every parent to prevent his children from learning to read and write? No: but, I would leave each parent to his own taste and his own means co-operating with the disposition and capacity of the child. The general taste of parents, and their naturally high opinion of their children’s capacities, are quite sufficient to furnish the schools, without the aid of another act of parliament and another cursed tax. It is natural to the fondness of parents, it is laudable emulation in them, to endeavour to raise their children in the consideration of the world; and, as no great degree of eminence is to be attained without the use of letters, it is laudable in them to make use thereof, when they can. But, some people must remain to labour; all men cannot attain to eminence in the world; and, therefore, that which is laudable in individuals, is, to say the best of it, foolish upon a national scale.—It is contended, that learning to read and write would *mend the morals* of the people. I have before observed, that the assumed increase of vice has taken place while schools and newspapers have been increasing ten-fold. By the help of Mr. Wilberforce, indeed, the word *religious* was to have been placed, in the bill, before education; and great care was to be taken to give the parson of the parish sufficient authority in the superintending of the school, without, however, making any provision to insure even a tolerable chance of there being a parson in the parish, except, perhaps, for a couple of hours of a Sunday. But, though Mr. Wilberforce would easily believe, that, with the help of a little new-light, the scholars would have no difficulty in solving those knotty points, arising from the text of the Scriptures, about which so many doctors have been quarrelling for so many centuries, each doctor condemning the other doctor to flames eternal, and that, too, not

ignorantly, but in good decent Latin and Greek; yet, it does not appear to have occurred to him, that, when they had learnt to read the Bible, they might possibly read something else, and that Grub street and the novel shops might furnish them with ideas exceedingly well calculated to add to, instead of diminishing, the fearful stock of vice assumed to be already existing. Is it, however, seriously urged; is there a man who will soberly assert, that the people of England, in any considerable number, can possibly be ignorant of their moral duties? Go to the top of any hill in the kingdom, and see how thickly the spires are scattered; consider how easy and how constant is the communication between all ranks of men; how scrupulous men are as to all matters relating to property; how frequent and how regular, and, generally speaking, how impartial, the administration of justice. Do this, Mr. Whitbread, and then say, if you can, that the people of England are ignorant, or can possibly be ignorant, of their moral duties; and that they want reading to teach them those duties.—“But, the political effects of this education!” Mr. Whitbread did not, that I know of, promise any benefit of this sort from his plan; but, the editor of the Morning Chronicle and others have affected to see a prospect of great advantage in “enlightening” the people in this way. I, however, can see none. For, what would the teaching of the people to read do? Enable them to read newspapers, those vehicles of falsehood, and of bad principles. That the press, left to itself, would enlighten men I allow; that discussion, if free, would end in favour of truth I know well. But, of the newspapers, and other periodical publications, and all books, or printed works, treating of politics, *five sixths*, at least, are, by one means or another, *bought*. The writers are, in fact, hired; and hired, too, to deceive the people; to spread falsehood instead of truth, darkness instead of light. Truth is a libel; and, what is the worst of it, fine and imprisonment is constantly dreaded on the one side, and perfect impunity as constantly relied on, on the other side. What information, what light are the people to receive from such a press? Do the people benefit from their reading of politics in France? Did they profit from it at Berlin? Do they profit from it in Russia or in Austria or in Holland? Yet there are newspapers in abundance there; and full as free, too, in fact, as the far greater part, as nine-tenths even, of our news papers. Of public men and measures, if you disapprove, you must

speak very cautiously; but, if you please to praise them, no matter how bold, how exaggerated, how false your statements. There is no gainsaying this: that where to *publish what is true* may subject a man to fine and imprisonment and pillory, the press must be an *injury* to political freedom. Some truths, and valuable truths, get abroad through the means of the press; but these are infinitely out numbered by the falsehoods; and, if the people were left without any press at all, matters would be much better, because they would then judge and act from what they *saw* and what they *felt*, and not from what they *read*. The operations of the press have, every one must allow, increased greatly in their extent within the last twenty-three years. Has political freedom *gained* much during that time? Have men been more secure in their persons and their property than they formerly were? It is my decided opinion, and, I think, that most men of reflection will concur with me, that, without the aid of the press, Pitt never would have been able to do half what he did during his terrible administration. If I am reminded of the *Electors of Westminster*, I say, that their light has not been derived from the press, but from being upon the spot; from *hearing* and *seeing* and receiving conviction of, what the press disguises from other men; and, it is notorious, that, during the last election, they acted in direct opposition to the exhortations of nine parts out of ten of the press. It is not, therefore, because they read more than other electors read, that they have acted virtuously and courageously, but because their knowledge of the truth led them to despise what they read.—There was one argument of *experience*, brought forward in support of this project, which, by way of conclusion, I must take a little notice of,—*the example of the people of Scotland*. The Scotch are never backward in putting forward their claims of any sort, and many just claims they have; but, I am not amongst those who are ready to allow them a *monopoly* either of virtue or of talent; and, I deny that their lower classes afford any example worthy of the imitation of ours. I deny that they are more industrious, more moral, more virtuous in any respect, than the people of England are. I have seen colonies that have been settled by Englishmen, and some by Irishmen, where industry *alone* could have possibly succeeded; but, I never yet saw a country settled and cleared by the *labour* of Scotchmen. The boastings which have been heard about the wondrous *improvements* in Scotland are infinite; but, will any man pretend

to say, that the labourers of that country are more moral, more orderly, their habitations more cleanly, their struggles against poverty more unremitted, their labour and their industry greater, than are those of the English labourers? This notion about Scotch example seems to have come up amongst us with the juvenile æconomists, whom the late ministers drafted from the office of the Edinburgh Review, which is a sort of depôt for speculators in politics, who go off, each in his turn, as he can make shift to write himself into place. The late ministers seem to have been enamoured with the whole corps, and Lord Henry Petty, in his wisdom, is said to have freighted a Berwick Smack with no small portion of it. Some of these cadet statesmen were put into parliament, where (poor lads!) they were never heard of more. Others were made commissioners of divers descriptions. Others wrote pamphlets about the Slave Trade and the Finances and Tithes and Commerce and Agriculture and the Poor, in expectancy of those high offices, the anticipated possession of which, alas! they must now exchange for the gauging-rule and bottle at the button hole. To this importation of speculators, to their assurance, and to the imbecility of their patrons, we owe, I suspect, all the fine novel projects of Mr. Whitbread and his friends, who seemed desirous of changing every thing but the corruptions, against which they had before so bitterly inveighed. Mr. Whitbread's preambular compliment to the Scotch, containing so gross an insult to us, had certainly its rise in the importunities of this upstart set, who, I was long ago informed, had wriggled themselves into such a degree of influence over even Mr. Fox, as to obtain from him a *pledge* upon matters of great national importance; to them we certainly owe this almost metaphysical project about the poor, and particularly the compliment to Scotland at the expence of our own character. Had the compliment been *true*, I should, I hope have been amongst the last to find fault with it; but I deny its truth; I assert it to be false; and my assertions are full as good as the assertions of Mr. Whitbread. But, I wish the matter not to rest upon assertion. If you try a question by individual observation, there is no coming to a decision, because the assertion on one side is as good as that on the other. Let us appeal, in an instance or two, to acknowledged facts. In general the *resources* of countries, as ascertained by the amount of their taxes, compared with their population, is not a very certain way of coming at a criterion whereby to judge of their industry, either positive or relative.

But, where there are two countries, under one and the same government, lying adjoining to each other, having both a due proportion of the offices and emoluments of the state, then the amount of the taxes raised in each, compared with their respective population, is a fair criterion whereby to judge of their relative industry, ingenuity, and enterprize. If this be so, and, I think, it would puzzle the whole corps of cadet statesmen to overset it, let us refer to the criterion here mentioned. The taxes, raised annually in Scotland, amount to something less than *one-seventeenth* of the taxes raised in Great Britain. The population of Scotland amounts to something less than *one-seventh* of the population of Great Britain; so that each person in England (including Wales, observe), each of these lazy vicious English, pays to the state annually much more than double the sum that is paid by each of those industrious and moral Scotch, of whom our labourers, in their hard struggles against poverty and misery, are insultingly told to take an example. The Irish, with a population of four millions; that is to say, a population amounting to a *third* of Great Britain; the poor abused, despised, wretched Irish, pay *two-seventeenths* of the expences of our army and navy, besides paying the whole of the interest upon their own national debt, and wholly maintaining their own expensive government, civil and military.—Let us not be put off with an assertion that the custom-house is chiefly in England; for the other taxes as well as customs bear the same proportion. Nor will any shuffle about *barren lands* avail the cadets; for, we take not, observe, extent of country, or nature of soil, but *population*, and the amount of the population is always the measure of the means of subsistence.—The other instance, which I shall take is grounded upon facts equally undeniable. It will, I think, be admitted, that when the people of a country are, in times of tranquillity and under no extraordinary circumstances, given to *emigrate*, that people cannot be very industrious, nor have, in any very high degree, the virtues, which we could wish to meet with in the lower orders of society. Savages, who never labour if they can avoid it, are always wandering from place to place. Sturdy beggars roam from town to town and from county to county. Change of place, change of profession, change of employers; “any thing rather than work,” is the motto of every lazy man in the world. Out of Scotland there have been more persons emigrated to America, within the last ten years, than out of

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England, in all probability, within the last hundred years, notwithstanding the great superiority in the population of the latter. "They emigrated for want of work;" a certain proof of a want of industry, of ingenuity, or of enterprize of the industrious sort. The people were *there* somehow or other. They could breed, it seems, though they could not live. A very pretty country this for England to take an *example* from! Nay, such influence have the Scotch had, and so foolish has been the government, that, upon a report made to parliament, that there was danger of a whole district of Scotland being depopulated *for want of work*, money, large sums of money, were, and still are, annually granted to set them to work in making canals and bridges and draining lakes in their own country; that is to say, to live in idleness upon, or, at the very best, to improve Scotland by, *the fruit of English labour*, the fruit of the labour of those, whom the cadet statesmen and their silly patrons, have the insolence to accuse of laziness and vice, and to whom they hold up the Scotch as an *example*.—We are a people that delight in quacks and pretenders of all sorts, otherwise it would have been impossible, that the parliament, however constituted, supposing a majority to be English, should, for a moment, have tolerated the false and insulting preamble, upon which I have been remarking; that they should have tolerated, in any shape, such an outrage upon the orderly and honest and laborious and ingenious and persevering and patient people of England. Where did any man, however far he may have travelled, see such cleanliness, such neatness, such attention to ornament as well as convenience, such care of their animals, such affection and tenderness for their parents and children, amongst the labouring part of the community, as are visible in the dress in the houses in the gardens and in the domestic life and manners of English labourers? There are more objects of this description in the county of Hampshire alone, though Lord Grenville lately told us that it ought to be no more dear to us than Hanover, for which we will remember him; there are more of these delightful objects in this one county, than there are, perhaps, in all the world besides, England excepted. And can I, when I daily see these objects, when I see and admire the dispositions of men, who, though pressed down with poverty, can, at their return from their daily labour, spend the twilight in works of neatness round their cottages; can I when I see this, refrain from feeling indignation at a set of upstart politicians, who know nothing of England, but what they have

seen from the deck of a smack or through the pane of a stage coach window, and who have the audacity to bid these English labourers look for an example to the gardenless and floor-less and chimney-less cabbins of Scotland, where the master of the mansion nestles in at night in company with his pig or his cow?

This subject has led me so much farther than I expected, that I must defer the other two till my next.

Botley, 27 Aug. 1807.

IRELAND'S INTERNAL SITUATION.

SIR,—I am well aware that your time is precious, and therefore I should be sorry to take up much of it without your deriving any advantage from what I might communicate; but, I am most anxious, now I find you have got rid of the Learned Languages, and probably of Sir H. Mildmay, to urge you to attend closely to the affairs of Ireland, to make yourself a perfect master of the real situation of that country, and not to fail repeatedly to lay the causes of its wretched state before the public. The grievances which the Irish complain of are numerous; amongst the rest, Tithes and the oppressive manner of collecting them; the heavy rents exacted from them by landlords and middlemen; and the Roman Catholics say, they ought to be allowed all the privileges in common, with the Protestants of the established church. With respect to the first of these points, it would be, indeed, well if any other method could be adopted, by which the clergy might be paid, than by tithes, as that mode must continue to create discontent, so long as the lands are held by people of such small capital, as the farmers of Ireland now are, and who at the same time, profess a different religion, from those for whom the tithes are exacted. As to the second point, there are many who assert (and I myself was once of the same opinion) that the misery the lower Irish endure is occasioned altogether by landlords and middlemen, and they go still farther, and say that the landlords have it completely in their power to relieve their tenantry. I most sincerely wish, Mr. Cobbett, that this was really the case; but you will find upon inquiry, that by no exertions of the landlords could the relief wanted be *effectually* given to the lower classes in Ireland. I beg now, Sir, to state some particulars, from which I think you will perceive that my assertion is founded in fact. In the first place, the traffic in lands (or what is called land jobbing) has been a practice in Ireland for centuries in-somuch that the landlord frequently four

or five removes from the actual cultivator, each of the intermediate persons deriving a profit, and perhaps, one or two of these *double* what the landlord himself obtains. The farm, instead of being held as at first taken, is almost invariably plotted out into portions much too small, had the farmers capital, to enable them to do justice to the country, or to themselves; but in few instances, have these people sufficient to accomplish any thing but with extreme difficulty, even upon these small spots; with extreme difficulty therefore, they accomplish the payment of their rents, nor could they pay one half of them, in most cases, were they to allow themselves and their families *better food than potatoes*. These farmers are altogether unable to pay for labour in money, they therefore procure the assistance they require during the year, by letting at *very high rents* a certain number of portions (measuring about an acre and a half English) according to the extent of their farms, to labourers who build their own mud cabbins, and cultivate potatoes for the sole subsistence of themselves and their families. The rents of their gardens as they are called, are scored off by day labour at a particular sum at first agreed upon.—Now, Sir, I beg here to observe, that as the Irish (unfortunately I think) have for a long period cultivated potatoes for the food of man, and as the farmers have continued all this time, to let out ground to be cropped with potatoes, instead of paying for labour, as in England in money, the labouring class have rapidly increased, and still continue to increase, whilst the middle class remain nearly stationary. As the labouring class are, without doubt, infinitely the most numerous, I shall proceed to inform you first of their situation: it is indeed most melancholy, and likely to produce discontent in any country. In the first place, they rent land as yearly tenants, upon which they depend intirely for their subsistence, from people (the farmers, not the landlords, pray observe) who are not in any degree more humanized than themselves. Next, the farmers their *landlords*, raise their rents from time to time, so as to make the rent and the year's labour agree as near as possible together; they have, therefore, scarcely any of them, any thing to receive when they settle accounts; and, consequently, nothing to procure money to purchase fuel and cloaths, except those who happen to possess a pig, which (though it would be scarcely credited in England) is fed in the same manner, and housed in the same cabin with their wives and children and themselves. Their potatoes are tithed, and they

have a tax called hearth money to pay. Now, Sir, fuel being extremely scarce in most parts of Ireland, and in consequence of the lower classes being fed upon potatoes, and being obliged on that account to light fires every day in the year to cook them, is much more a necessary of life than it is in this country: not having scarce ever money to purchase it, they are *obliged to commit theft* to procure that article, and accordingly they cut down and burn every thing they can lay their hands upon. To add to all this, should the labourer die, his wife and children have neither parish nor other place to apply to for assistance, and not being able in all likelihood to work out the rent of a potatoe ground, are obliged to betake themselves to begging or stealing.—I shall now proceed to speak of the Farmers. I think I can with justice say, that they are frequently the oppressors of *their tenants* the labourers, and I may fairly call them middlemen, for they certajny hold both the situation of tenants and of landlords; and they are besides *landlords* to the *most numerous class in Ireland*. In addition to the great objection the farmers make to the payment of Tithes, they generally complain that they hold their lands at such high rents that they are always in distress, and they assert also, that many of them are perpetually in difficulties from being liable to the rents and profit rents of other persons, besides their immediate landlords, insomuch that it is not uncommon, but perpetually the case, for them to be distrained after the *whole rent due from the land by them is paid up*. This last is a most intolerable grievance—that a man should have *his stock and goods taken by force and sold for the payment of the debt of another*. However, the head landlord cannot afford the tenant any relief; if the middle man should have received his rent first, and withheld the profit, there is no other method for the *superior landlords* to pursue, but to distrain or bring ejectments. In order to apply a remedy for the sufferings of the Irish farmers on this account, it would be necessary for the head landlords to purchase out the intermediate tenants down to the cultivators. This however it would be impossible for them to accomplish to any extent, from the profit rents being frequently of more value than the head rents. But, suppose the landlords could purchase out *what are now called* the middlemen, still they would have to deal with middlemen, as the farmers themselves are in *every instance such*, as standing between the landlords and the labourers, having a numerous, wretched, ragged tenantry over whom the *head landlords or middle men have*

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no sort of controul, and over whom the farmers frequently exercise great tyranny. From what I have said, Sir, I presume you will think that the landlords are not so much to blame as has been continually asserted. I presume also it is your opinion, that giving the Roman Catholics the privileges lately proposed, would not make the Irish richer or more happy. A regulation with respect to tithes is certainly much wanted; but regulate this matter as you will, it will certainly not wholly remove the discontents of the Irish. The landlords and middlemen would undoubtedly wish to have tithes completely abolished, as in all new lettings they would get so much the more for their land. The present mode of collecting tithes is particularly obnoxious to the people of Ireland. I think a better mode might be adopted. Suppose, for instance, a jury of persons of respectability was to be appointed to value the tithe of every farm separately in each parish, once in seven years, and that the amount of the value of the tithe was to be paid to the head landlord together with his rent, who should be answerable for it to the clergyman, this would obviate the necessity of employing tithe proctors, a set of people more detested by the lower orders in Ireland than any other, and in many instances deservedly so. After what I have said, it would be natural to ask, what then are the causes of the wretched state of Ireland? To which with submission I answer, that the chief cause of the distressed state of that country arises first, from the former checks given to its trade in general, but more particularly with England whose markets are *still* completely shut against the Irish for the sale of almost every article of manufacture; this last impolitic measure has prevented Ireland from deriving any benefit from foreign trade; at the time, and since a free trade to foreign countries was granted to the Irish, they have found themselves, and still do, too much in want of capital to be able to establish manufactures, and to give long credit abroad; they required to be permitted to send whatever articles they could manufacture to this country, *where only they could procure prompt payment for them*; by which means by degrees they would have accumulated sufficient to have enabled them to sell to foreigners upon the same terms as *their fellow subjects* the English. From the *imprudence* of the English in withholding this necessary assistance from them, a check has been given, to the collection of people in towns for the purpose of employing themselves in manufacture and trade, and the increase of the population among the middle classes, the

prop of all well regulated states, has been thereby blasted.—Now, Sir, the mischief has been completed by a practice which the want of capital has tended to encourage; namely, the *cultivation of potatoes as a food for man*. So that in spite of poverty the country has been by this means swarmed with a miserable half naked, half savage population, who from their condition *must* be ever discontented, and easily induced to disturb the peace of society. Let then England apply a remedy for evils which have arisen possibly from a mistaken policy, let Ireland have the benefit of a *perfect union*, let all restrictions upon trade be taken off, all unnecessary port charges and delays; make it the interest of the Irish to defend their country by permitting them to obtain something worth defending. Let government expend a liberal sum in raising coal, of which there is plenty to be found in Ireland, but from the poverty of the people of no benefit to them. Scarce any manufactures can be carried on to profit without this article, and the want of fuel in Ireland prevents many improvements in farming of the most common kind. Trees or fences cannot be planted, without the almost absolute certainty of their being stolen to burn. With the exertions of government directed to the encouragement of manufacture in Ireland, that country would soon assume a different aspect, people would collect in towns, and the population increase in the middle class, instead of (as at present) only in the class of potatoe diggers; and land jobbers finding encouragement to employ their means in trade and manufacture, would desist from their present traffic, which is almost the only trade encouraged or worth following in Ireland. I shall now only intrude so far as just to describe the trade of a land jobber. He commences by bidding for a farm, and if his offer is accepted and he has made a good bargain, he probably does not hesitate to sell his interest immediately, or otherwise he divides the farm and puts a number of miserable wretches upon it, who frequently pay him whatever the produce of the land will sell for, except the potatoes necessary for their subsistence; in this way he takes farm after farm, till from possessing scarce any thing in the outset, he often in the end has profit rents amounting to thousands a year. I hope, Sir, the information I have endeavoured to communicate will be of service.—I am, &c.—M. H.—August 20, 1807.

P. S. Since I finished my letter I took up a paper in which was Mr. Sheridan's speech. He applies more to the gentlemen of Ireland

than to the government of this country, and says the point is to begin at the cottages, (cabbins or mud hovels he should have said, for as to what an Englishman would call a cottage there is not one in Ireland). However, I beg leave to differ with him in beginning with the cabbins; and though I should repeat the plan set forth in my letter, I shall say, begin with putting his Majesty's subjects in Ireland, whether they profess the Roman Catholic religion, are of the established church or dissenters, *as far as regards the encouragement given to manufactures and trade*, exactly upon a footing with his Majesty's Welsh subjects of the same religious persuasions. Let government then advance money for the purpose, or otherwise let a company be formed to work the coal mines in Ireland. Regulate the manner of receiving tithes or totally abolish them. Build churches and parsonage houses in every parish where wanted; oblige the clergy to reside or pay one half of their profits to resident curates. After doing which, I think *with a little assistance from the country gentlemen*, every thing will take a right course. People as I said before will collect in towns, there will then be a greater demand (than at present) for butchers meat, wool, hides, tallow. Farmers will therefore apply their root crops whether turnips or potatoes to the winter feeding of cattle and sheep as is generally done in England; they will become rich and pay for labour in money instead of in land. The potatoe diggers now inhabiting cabbins, will doubtless have cottages built for them; *as all ranks become richer the labourers will have no necessity to thieve for fuel*; the connections which will be formed between the English and Irish from trade, will hold the Irish as steady to England in all future wars as the Welsh now are, though the well known word Sassenagh or Saxenick (Saxon) as a term of reproach, may continue to be used in both countries.

ELECTIVE FRANCHISE.

SIR,—In the Courier newspaper of the 10th inst. I find some very large estates, and other *valuable things* belonging to some great man, advertised for sale. Amongst other *property*, the following to be sold without reserve.—“The Manor, or Lordship, of Lampeter, with all its **POLITICAL**, and other *rights!!!*—Lampeter is a *contributory borough* for returning a member to *parliament*, for the town of Cardigan, and all persons admitted at the Lord's Court, are intitled to vote for the return of such member. More upon this head appears unnecessary in this place.”—In the ad-

vertisements of sales of this kind, I have never before seen anything quite so plain; it is compleat, or if it wants any thing it is the sale of the inhabitants themselves; though I do not see how that would render their condition worse. This fact should be seen by every man in the country, it needs only to be seen to produce the best possible effect.—I beg you will insert it. If you cannot, lay it carefully by, for the day is fast approaching when such facts as these will render the people essential service. In this conviction, I remain, &c. &c.—A. H.—London, August 17, 1807.

ROMAN CATHOLIC PETITION.

A pamphlet has been published at Dublin containing the Petition intended to have been presented to the last Parliament by the Roman Catholics of Ireland, and strictures upon its object. The following is the introduction to the pamphlet:

“The following is a correct copy of the petition to Parliament, prepared on behalf of the Catholics of Ireland, which was read and adopted at different public meetings of that body, and actually subscribed by several hundred thousand persons; many, highly respectable in rank, and all, independent in mind, and substantial in property. No document can more strongly evince, or more exactly testify, the state of public feeling on this important subject; it discloses the views and objects of a great portion of the British Empire, who are justly dissatisfied with their condition, but who pursue the remedy with moderation and with temper; calmly pointing to the evil, the restriction and diminution of civil liberty, and defining exactly the mode and extent of relief, the full and impartial establishment of the English constitution.”—The Petition is as follows:

To the Right Hon. and Hon. the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled—The humble petition of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, whose names are hereunto subscribed, on behalf of themselves, and of others, his Majesty's subjects professing the Roman Catholic religion,

Sheweth, that your petitioners, as is set forth in their humble petition presented to this Honourable House, on the 25th of March, 1805, are, by divers statutes, still of force within this realm, rendered liable to many incapacities and restrictions, not imposed upon any other description of his Majesty's subjects.—That your petitioners with confidence assert, that they are sup-

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ported by the testimony of many of the ablest senators and wisest statesmen which the empire could ever boast, that there is nothing in their conduct as subjects, or tenants as Christians, which ought to disqualify them from enjoying equal privileges with his Majesty's other subjects; and they beg leave to state, that they do not yield to any class of persons, in affectionate attachment to his sacred person and family, in due obedience to the laws, and in just predilection for the British constitution.—That at the present period, which requires all the energies of the state, and the exertions of an united people, your petitioners conceive that they cannot offer a stronger proof of their loyalty, than by humbly representing to this Honourable House, their earnest wish, to be altogether committed with their country, and reinstated in a full and complete enjoyment of the English government and laws.—For your petitioners beg leave respectfully to submit to this Hon. House, that the constitution of England is the great charter of this land, and the inheritance of the dutiful and faithful subjects of his Majesty: the conditions which the ancestors of some of us accepted, when they submitted to the Crown, and on the faith of which, the ancestors of others passed over and effected their settlement in Ireland—was, that they should participate in the laws and liberties of England; many concessions of his Majesty's royal progenitors, and repeated acts of Parliament, confirmed the invaluable blessing; it has had the sanction of an establishment of six hundred years; whilst the privations, of which we complain, are but the innovation of a century; from that innovation we appeal in this enlightened age, to the wisdom and justice of those august bodies, in whose hands are the fate and fortunes of the empire; we appeal against acts, repugnant to the sense and habits of Englishmen, and to the genius of the English constitution; against precedents, not entitled, from the circumstances in which they were formed, to be immortal. We were excluded from our franchises, when the tumult of civil wars had scarcely been appeased; whilst the animosities they produced were recent; and at the close of the convulsion incidental to a widely extended revolution of property. We were excluded at a moment, when the settlement was precarious and new, upon which time and habit, the extinction of all other claims, common principles of obedience, and common interests, have now conferred all the solidity of unquestioned and immutable establishment.—Your petitioners further beg leave to recal to the attention of

this Honourable House, that we do not pay the penalty, neither is the blame imputed to us, of no innovating or capricious temper. We have not revolted from any institutions which challenged our obedience. We have adhered to the tradition of our fathers, the immemorial usage of the land. We profess a religion compatible with the form of government under which we are placed; accommodated to the spirit, and dear to the feelings of the great and growing majority of our country; a religion which the existing incapacities do not seem calculated, and are probably not expected to suppress; for it has been deemed, in a considerable degree, to merit public encouragement and protection.—Your petitioners do then most humbly state, that they are excluded from many of the most important offices of trust, power, and emolument in their country; whereby they are degraded below the condition of their fellow-subjects, even of the meanest class, and stigmatised as aliens and strangers in their native land.—That in the immediate effect of this exclusion, not less than four-fifths of the inhabitants of Ireland are involved, formed into a distinct people, and depressed in all their classes and gradations of rank, of opulence, and industry; in every situation of life does this degrading inferiority exist, and its influence reaching to every profession, to even the peaceable pursuits of industry and commerce.—That the remote, but not less sensible consequences, extend to the remaining population of the land, distracting his Majesty's people with disquietude and jealousy; and substituting an insidious system of monopoly on the one hand, and privation on the other, for the tried and established orders of society, and for the salutary practice and sound principles of the English constitution. And your petitioners further humbly submit, that from the prejudice generated and fostered by this discriminating system, the spirit of the laws outstripping the letter, no degree of rank, virtue, or merit, can exempt an Irish Catholic from being considered an object of suspicion; and several of the most estimable privileges and advantages of a free government, to which they ought to consider themselves entitled, are rendered, with respect to them, inoperative.—In calling your attention to their situation, your petitioners beg leave to assure this Honourable House, that they are actuated more as Irishmen than as Catholics; and less influenced by a partial interest, as a religious description, than by an interest truly public and national, intimately connected with the welfare of this country, and the prosperity of the whole

empire, your petitioners being fully convinced, both from history and experience, that however religious distinctions may have supplied a pretext, a spirit of political monopoly has been the actuating principle of civil dissension, and of that unhappy national misunderstanding, which has so long injured the character, and lessened the value of this island.—For your petitioners are strongly impressed with the conviction, that the continuance of the disqualifying laws is not only incompatible with the freedom and happiness of the great body of the Irish people, and detrimental to the resources of the state; but, as it is calculated to damp the ardour and divert the attention of the nation to partial interests and party dissensions, from measures of general security, may eventually prove injurious to the strength and stability of the empire.—Your petitioners, with a deep sense of gratitude, acknowledge that they are indebted to the wisdom and liberality of the parliament of Ireland, and to the paternal interposition of his Majesty for the removal of many of the disabilities and incapacities under which they laboured; and they refer, with confidence in the justice of their cause, to the solemn and memorable declaration of the Irish legislature: “That from the uniform and peaceable behaviour of the Roman Catholics of Ireland for a long series of years, it appeared reasonable and expedient to relax the disabilities and incapacities under which they labour, and that it must tend not only to the cultivation and improvement of this kingdom, but to the prosperity and strength of all his Majesty’s dominions, that his Majesty’s subjects of all denominations, should enjoy the blessings of a free constitution, and should be bound to each other by mutual interest and mutual affection.”—And your petitioners most solemnly declare, that they do not seek, or wish in any way to injure or encroach upon the rights, privileges, possessions, or revenues, appertaining to the bishops and clergy of the Protestant religion as by law established, or to the churches committed to their charge, or to any of them; the extent of their humble supplication being, that they may be governed by the same laws, and rendered capable of the same civil offices, franchises, rewards and honours, as their fellow subjects of every other religious denomination.—May it therefore please this Honourable House to take into its consideration the statutes, penal and restrictive, now affecting the Catholics of Ireland, and to admit them to the full enjoyment of those privileges, which every Briton regards as his best inhe-

ritance; and which your petitioners most humbly presume to seek as the brethren of Englishmen, and co-heirs of the constitution.—And your petitioners will ever pray, &c.

THE ARMY.

PROPOSITIONS SUBMITTED TO PARLIAMENT, BY MR. WINDHAM AND LORD CASTLE-REAGH RESPECTING THE STATE OF THE ARMY.—*August 13, 1807.*

Mr. WINDHAM’S PLAN.

No. 1. That the effective strength of the army was,

	Regular.	Militia.	Total.
On 1st of March 1806	173,600	75,182	248,782
“ “ “ “ “ 1807	181,856	77,211	259,067

A reduction having in the mean time taken place of a local corps of 3000 men and upwards, in the Island of Ceylon.

2. That the provisions of certain Acts of Parliament, passed during the year 1806, and having in view the better ordering of the army, and the improvement of the condition of the non-commissioned officers and soldiers took effect from the 24th of June in the said year.

3. That from the 1st of July following, the number of recruits raised for the Regular Army (exclusive of those raised for Foreign or Colonial Corps, and 650 men for a regiment commanded by the hon. Colonel Dill-on) was,

In the 1st period of 3 months, ending on the 1st Oct. 1806.	2,770	Being at the rate per annum of	11,080
In the 2d period ending on the 1st Jan. 1807 - - - -	3,406		13,934
In the 3d period, ending on the 1st of April 1807 - -	5,335		21,340
In the 4th period, ending on the 1st July 1807 - - - -	6,078		24,312

4. That on the 25th October, 1806, the bounty to recruits was reduced,

Cavalry, from £13 8s. to £8 3s.
Infantry - - 16 16. - - 11 11.

5. That the number of recruits raised for the Regular Army in Great Britain and Ireland, according to the Adjutant General’s Returns, was, in the first six months of

	By ordinary Recruiting	Additional Force	Total
1805 - -	6,736	4,187	10,923
1806 - -	4,949	4,834	10,783
1807 - -	11,413	- - -	11,413

6. That amongst the numbers raised in the first six months of 1805, are included 3,089 raised by Officers recruiting for rank.

7. That the men raised under the Additional Force Act, were for Home Service only, and might be of any height, not less

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than five feet two inches, and of any age between 18 and 45.

8. That in the Regular Army no man could be received but between the ages of 18 and 30, and of a height not less than five feet four inches; the standard for men not entering for General Service, but choosing their own regiments, being five feet five inches, and for the Guards and Cavalry still higher.

9. That by recruits raised by ordinary recruiting, are meant men raised either at the head-quarters of regiments, or by the Recruiting Districts, late under the superintendence of the Inspector General.

10. That according to the War Office Return of Recruits, for whom bounty has been drawn, as raised at the head-quarters of Regiments in Great Britain, and the Inspector-General's Return of the numbers raised by the recruiting districts, the produce of the ordinary recruiting was, during the first six months of

	At Head Quarters of Regiments in Gt. Britain.	By Recruiting Districts in Gt. Britain.	By Do. in Ireland.	Total.
1805 -	1,470	2,327	912	4,709
1806 -	1,084	1,957	953	3,994
1807 -	2,536	6,115	2,396	11,047

11. That the number of men who volunteered from limited to unlimited service was, during six months

Ending 1st July 1805	-	-	-	2,225
1st Jan. 1806	-	-	-	2,863
1st July 1806	-	-	-	2,413
1st Jan. 1807	-	-	-	7,081

12. That the number of men who deserted from the Army at home was, during the first six months of

	In Great Britain.	In Ireland
1805 -	1 in 202	1 in 204
1806 -	1 in 217	1 in 235
1807 -	1 in 293	1 in 205

13. That the number of men who deserted from the Recruiting Districts, was, during the first six months of

1805 -	-	-	-	1 in 10
1806 -	-	-	-	1 in 10
1807 -	-	-	-	1 in 12

LORD CASTLEREAGH'S PLAN.

1. That the increase of 8,256 men, as stated, in the Regular Army, between March 1806 and March 1807, has been produced by 2,908 men received from the Irish Militia, and 3,542 under the Additional Force Act—Total 6,450 men—without which aids (deducting our losses in Egypt and South America, viz. 2,185 men, which appear in the effectives of the army on the 1807) the army would have decreased, under the regulations established in June 1806, in the number of 379 men.

That the regular army has been progressively increasing, previous to the establishment of the new system of levying men, as follows; the amount being,

On the 1st July 1804	-	-	-	141,740
Ditto 1805	-	-	-	162,997
Ditto 1806	-	-	-	175,997

3. A. That the number of recruits raised quarterly for the Regular Army, between the 1st March 1805, and 1st March 1806, when the repeal of the additional Force Act was determined on, was (exclusive of foreign and colonial levies, and of men transferred from the militia) as follows:

		Number raised.	Rate per Ann.
1st Quarter ending 1st July 1805	-	4,865	19,460
2d Ditto 1st Dec. 1805	-	4,252	17,008
3d Ditto 1st Jan. 1806	-	4,790	19,160
4d Ditto 1st April 1806	-	6,096	24,384

3. B. That the number of men raised as above, between the 1st April 1805 and 1st April 1806, was 20,003; the number between July 1806 and July 1807, 17,689, being 2314 less than in the former year; whereas the number of boys included in the 17,689, exceeded by 1,076, the number included in the 20,003, the preceding year's produce.

3. c. That while the number of men obtained for regular service, including men transferred from the Militia (and exclusive of foreign and colonial levies) was, between July 1805 and July 1806, 33,693 men; between July 1806 and July 1807, 20,681, being 13,012 men less than in the preceding year, exclusive of the services of the men raised in the latter year being determinable in seven or ten years, according to the terms of their enlistment.

3. d. That whilst the number of men levied in the latter year was less than in the former, as stated in the preceding resolutions, an annual additional charge of £450,000 increased Pay and Pensions to the Army, has been incurred, as an encouragement to induce men to enlist, being at the rate of about 25 pounds per man on the number of men raised within the year; and which expence must be hereafter largely increased, in proportion as the pensions on 14 and 21 year's service come into operation.

3. e. That during the former year the Recruiting Parties did not exceed in number 405; that in the latter year they have been increased to 1,113, exclusive of above 400 extra Recruiting Officers; and from 8th December 1806, 54 second battalions have been recruiting, under an intimation, that if they did not raise 400 men in six months, the Battalions would be then reduced, and the Officers placed on Half Pay; which extraordinary increase of the number of Recruiting

Parties must be considered not only as highly prejudicial to the discipline and efficiency of the Army, but, as so much expence incurred for the levy of men, as distinguished from the performance of Regimental Duty.

3. F. That whilst the number of men raised as above for the Regular Service, has in the latter year been reduced, the proportion of desertions in the army serving at Home has been rather increased, the proportion being, in the five successive half-yearly periods, as follows;

Desertions in Army at Home:

Jan. 1805 to July 1805	- - -	1 in 194
July 1805 to Jan. 1806	- - -	1 in 152
Jan. 1806 to July 1806	- - -	1 in 275
July 1806 to Jan. 1807	- - -	1 in 243
Jan. 1807 to July 1807	- - -	1 in 236

4. That the expence of Levy Money for General Service has been reduced—for Cavalry, from 19l. to 15l. 4s. 6d.; and for Infantry, from 22l. 8s. to 18l. 12. 6d. But the term of service has also been reduced, from Service for Life, to Service for ten and seven years, which supposes two additional periods of enlistment, and consequently two additional Bounties in the course of a service of 21 years, exclusive of the additional pay and pensions above referred to.

6. That among the number raised in the first 6 months of 1807, being 11,411 men, 8,035 have been raised by the 54 Second Battalions; that is, by Officers recruiting to avoid reduction.

7. and 8. That, with the exception of 6,242 men transferred to Garrison Battalions, all men raised under the Army of Reserve and Additional Force Acts have been since enlisted into the Line, being of the age and height required by his Majesty's Regulations; and amongst the men so transferred to Garrison Battalions, are included all men who did not choose to enter for General Service, without reference to age or height.

11. That the men volunteering from limited to unlimited service, from the 1st July 1806, to 1st January 1807, received 10 guineas bounty for only extending their service from local to general service; whereas before that period (the bounty being the same), the men transferring themselves to the line, exchanged their service, not only from home to foreign service, but from service limited in point of time to service for life; and the men in the latter period, who refused to transfer their services, were ordered to be drafted into garrison battalions.

VOLUNTEERS.—*Circular Letter from the Secretary at War; dated War Office, Aug. 10, 1807.*

Regulations, extending the pay and allow-

ances granted to Volunteer Corps of Artillery and Infantry, to men enrolled subsequently to the 24th July, 1806; and permitting the said corps to assemble upon permanent pay and duty; and determining the charge for inspections.

I. The same pay and allowance as are granted to those members of Volunteer corps of Artillery and Infantry, enrolled prior to the 24th July, 1806, are extended from the 25th of April, 1807, to those men who may have been enrolled therein subsequently to the 24th July, 1806, or who may be enrolled hereafter, not exceeding the establishment of the corps. Should any men be enrolled beyond the establishment, they are, as formerly, to be considered as supernumeraries.—II. Such men as may have been enrolled between the 24th of July 1806, and the 25th of April, 1807, can only be permitted to be charged for from the latter date.

III. Such volunteer corps of artillery and infantry as shall not have exercised more than 16 days in the present year, have the option of assembling upon permanent pay and duty, under the conditions of the regulations which were in force in the year 1805.—IV. No corps is to be assembled for less than 10, or more than 14 days; and in no instance are the number of days of exercise (including the days of inspection) and the number of days on permanent duty (including the days on the march) to amount together to more than 26; but it is understood that all volunteers shall muster for drill and exercise one day in each week that may be entitled to exemptions.—V. The non commissioned officers, drummers, and private men, will be entitled to receive 1s. per diem, each, as marching or bounty money, for the number of days they shall be assembled on permanent duty, over and above the pay and allowances of their respective ranks. This allowance will, as formerly, be issued, in England, by the Receiver-General of the County, and in Scotland, by the Collector of the Cess.

VI. This permission to Volunteer Corps of Artillery and Infantry, to assemble on permanent pay and duty, regard only the present year; such duty must, therefore, be performed previously to the 25th Dec., 1807.—VII. Those corps which may be desirous of thus assembling, must apply, as heretofore, through His Majesty's Lieutenant of the county, to the Secretary for the Home Department.—VIII. No extra pay is allowed for days of inspection; they are to be considered as ordinary days of exercise, and are to be charged for such, and to form part of the 26 days for which pay is allowed in the year.

J. PULTENEY.